

## Contributions

### SHADOWS

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We all cast our shadows wherever we go, and they have either a healthy or unhealthy influence over other lives. What is a shadow? It is made by a dark object coming between us and the light, a cutting off, an intercepting of brightness. Night is shadow caused by the earth coming between us and the sun. This, however, is not altogether unwelcome tho the sun is hidden for a time and darkness gathers about us. Night is not all black; light pours from it, stars in their beauty sparkle and twinkle their light. The moon with its undazzling brilliancy is very welcome and enjoyable thro night's shadow. There are human shadows which make it dark or light about us.

First, there are people whose presence does not bring light and joy with them to whom they meet. Somehow they cast a gloom all over us and make us less happy. They make it harder for us to live sweetly, cheerfully and victoriously.

They cast dark shadows, sadness, fear, doubts, worries. They live on these and deal them out to others, while in the second we find the opposite. We have in God's Word the history, facts and power of a good man's shadow, Acts 5:15. The sick and poor were brought out and laid by the wayside that His shadow might fall on them. In divine record we have the story of their healing. Miraculous power God gave this man, Peter, to impress the people of the divineness of Christian life. Can we expect to do miracles of healing by the shadows we cast?

Our shadows are cast somewhere and in different ways. We mention two, the dark shadow and the light shadow: the first we have spoken of. The other or opposite, instead of obscuring the light, it appears to stream thro them and to be made all the brighter, throwing out the elements of the broader and higher life, helpful not a hindrance.

Every one of us has a shadow of our own, so we may call this a personal subject. The question is, what kind of shadows are we casting? What effect on others and their lives? Are we the dark or light shadow, disheartening, depressing, discouraging, killing spiritual life, or inspiring cheer, gladness, hope, faith and charity? We must be in one way or the other. We find sympathizers with others in trouble who really make trouble or pain harder to bear on the friends less able to endure. Take such, for instance, who call in the sickroom and how much worse the patient is after their visit. They carry no new strength or cheer in their hearts, altho very gentle friends. They have rehearsed all the terribleness

of disease and have aggravated the illness of the patient. Or one in sorrow, they fail to bring real comfort, entering into the painful elements of the experience and instead of alleviating have intensified the sorrow. It makes the burdens heavier and the way darker. The same against the Christian life, while the heart and soul is left with less hope and comfort for its struggle. These are dark shadows. There are, too, many that intercept the light and leave darkness and chill on the life on which their shadow, impressions and influence falls.

There are others who carry light and comfort wherever they go and on whoever their shadow—influence—falls. Peter's shadow had wonderful strength in it, moving the people to repentance, faith and healing, and they rejoiced in the Lord.

Bring some promise of God, hope and cheer, words inspiring, it makes the discouraged man feel that that is a friend really interested in him, his case is not hopeless, he need not despair. He is then better able to bear all troubles and trials and sorrow. Such persons carry benedictions wherever they go. Every life their shadow rests on or touches, receives some blessing from God thro them. The secret of this is that they are filled with love, the love of Christ abiding in them, desirous of doing good to others. Love is always self-forgetful and administers, anxious to help. Love is thoughtful, careful never to give pain, to make burdens light, not harder. Another element is victoriousness. We must be overcomers ere we can assist others to overcome that which is displeasing to God. We frequently hear it said, "Only those who have suffered are fitted to help others, for they know how to sympathize and feel for them and understand the pain or sorrow or struggle." But it seems to me that this depends on how they have come thro their trial or suffering or struggle for righteousness. It depends on which way the victory lies. Perhaps it lies in the shadow of defeat, and has no experience that fits them to help others on to Christ. The one that has been victor in life's battles is able to be a comforter and inspire those who are in deep trial and struggle, to accept the way out of them, even as Christ was victorious.

Every person should seek to have a beneficial influence that will carry comfort and blessing wherever it reaches. The only way to obtain such is to be filled with that mind that was in Christ, to be filled with the Holy Spirit, then their lives will be full of rich and healthful inspirations, then the name of Jesus with holy fragrance will be as precious ointment poured forth. How easy this would make the life of others. Over yonder on the heavenly hill-tops the sun is shining.

Shadows here, but sunshine beyond. Whoever lets float a sunbeam in this world, starts a benediction among men and women, young and old, or sets a light where it may shine on the path of a weary traveler has done good.

Sunbeam shadows, darting to and fro like the little humming bird, how pleasant to watch and profit by. How different from the dark, ugly, black shadows that bring discomfort and misery wherever they touch. Our shadow as we pass along the streets of life should bless those upon whom it falls, then we shall be God's saving breath in this world, diffusing the influence of heaven amid human sorrow and sin.

What about our missionary shadows? These two ways that we have mentioned must shine or darken the same upon our missions and mission work as upon Christian life and conduct. Some people cast shadows of darkness over the work, and it suffers because of them. "I don't care. It is nothing to me what those people do or how they live." Lack of interest, selfishness, not broad minded, but narrow, not much, if any desire for the salvation of precious souls. I'm not going to give of my money. I need it for something else. I don't believe in missions much any way. "Charity begins at home," and stops with myself. All these are injurious shadows that sweep over God's cause as it is labored for in missionary work. Struggling under these burdens, the cause is like one shut in a dark room. He cannot see the striking characters that surround him; all to him is wrapped in thickest darkness, but God is with him on either side and he knows God and waits patiently before him. So with the mission cause. God is with it and sends his children casting shadows of sunshine, such as deep interest in the work, unceasing prayer backed with financial support. I am willing to sacrifice to save some one to have the gospel preached to suffering humanity, to those shrouded in sin and darkness. What can I do? How can I help the work? I can't go, but I can help send some one. I can throw out the sunshine that flows in my heart—the light of Christ's love even as a crystal drop of water acts upon a beam of sunshine, separating it into elements of wonderful beauty, a throwing out of human tenderness, sympathy, helpfulness, sacrifice and consecration. With these shadows come the light of heaven and the cause of missions advances from under its dark shadow and faces the enemy in open battle, while all the time the dark, black bullets are fired at this work. They hurt and cripple. Now beloved, where is the advantage to any who may cast those unwelcome shadows. Arouse yourselves and be about your Father's business. Never place yourself a dark shadow or hindrance between God's light and his